



# IDAHO

## LEARN & SERVE

### NEWSLETTER



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OCTOBER 2007

## Note from the Director

Welcome to the first Service Learning Newsletter from the Idaho State Department of Education! We are excited to be able to share the experiences and successes of the schools in Idaho that have received a Service Learning grant. This Newsletter will be a great vehicle for students to connect with one another, share what service learning means to them, and celebrate their knowledge and skills they have gained through service learning.

The "Idaho Service Learning Newsletter", you must agree, is a BORING and totally uncreative title. I purposely didn't try to come up with a name because the creative talent is out there with YOU, the students. SO, I am announcing a contest to "name the newsletter". It should be a title that fits, of course, with service learning. Please send in entries, either individually or grouped from a school, to my e-mail at [cmkary@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:cmkary@sde.idaho.gov) or fax them to Cheryl Kary (208) 334-2228. The student whose title is selected (or a school group) will be notified, and a short write up on them (with a photo) will be in the next newsletter. The deadline for sending in entries is December 15, 2007.

## Schools can get Grants to Perform Service Learning

### *Idaho Statesman, October 2, 2007*

Cheryl Kary one day would like to see kids at every elementary school in Idaho doing what students at Highlands Elementary have been doing for the past few years: mixing public service with academic work in service learning projects.

Last year, Highlands first-graders became penpals with elderly people and wrote letters to them as part of their regular writing classes. Second-graders worked with the Foothills Learning Center to combat dog waste on hiking trails. Sixth-graders visited an apartment complex where many refugee families lived to teach bicycle safety and maintenance and to donate 30 bikes.

Highlands and ANSER Charter School are the only two schools in Boise that receive money from a state program called Learn and Serve Idaho, which funnels federal money to local schools that integrate public service and education.

Educators say service learning helps children see the practical application of academic concepts like math and English.

"They learn problem-solving skills, they learn to become a better citizen, and they get compassion for other people," said Kary, who coordinates Learn and Serve Idaho.

Around the state, 12 schools have received grants from Learn and Serve. Students and teachers at those schools came up with a project and a community partner, such as a local nonprofit organization.

Schools that are selected win from \$5,000 to \$10,000 which can be used to hire a service learning coordinator or pay for curriculum, supplies or workshops.

This month, Kary invited a Canadian group called Leaders Today to speak to Idaho students about community service. At Highlands, speakers Matt Tod and Giustina D'Elia asked students what they would like to change and helped them come up with service learning projects.

Sixth-grader Sarah Smith said she would like to find a way to help the homeless. Smith has long experience with community service; at her birthday party this month, she had guests bring money for an organization in Kenya, instead of gifts.

"I knew that I didn't really need them," she said of the gifts. "And other kids really needed stuff. They need clean water and schools and things like that." (Continued page 3)

# Students Head to Boise next week for a lesson in Service Learning

Idaho State Department of Education Media Release—Melissa McGrath

BOISE - Nearly 100 students from Treasure Valley and Magic Valley schools are heading to Boise next week to take part in a Learn and Serve Idaho Youth Leadership Workshop. Learn and Serve enables students to make meaningful contributions to their community while building their academic and civic skills.

"This is a great opportunity for Idaho's students to incorporate community service into the lessons they learn in school every day," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna.

The workshop is the first of three Service Learning Youth Leadership Workshops that the State Department of Education's Learn & Serve Idaho program is hosting across the state. The Youth Leadership Teams at 12 schools that received Learn & Serve Grants this year are required to attend these workshops. Students from five schools in the Treasure Valley and Magic Valley will attend this first workshop. These schools are ANSER Charter School, Highlands Elementary, Parma Learning Center, Middleton High School, and Wendell Middle School.

The workshops are designed to help motivate students and offer ideas on ways they can develop innovative

Learn & Serve projects that are integrated with classroom learning in their schools.

Organizing a food drive, for example, is a great way to build student leadership skills and inform students on the issues of hunger in their community. Instead of just a competition among classes, students involved in the Learn & Serve project read books on hunger, research their community, talk with representatives at local food banks and create written materials to get everyone eager to participate. Teachers also might incorporate the food drive into a math lesson by weighing and measuring the food, or create an English lesson where students are asked to write recipe cards from the food that is collected. The students could also learn about the four food groups and study good nutrition. When the students are the leadership, they can meet the needs of the community and learn real-life problem solving skills.

Next week also marks the National Learn & Serve Challenge, a weeklong series of local, state and national events organized by the National Service-Learning Partnership to raise awareness and public support for service-learning.

The one-day Service Learning Youth

Leadership Workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 20 in the Hatch Ballroom at Boise State University's Student Union Building. The workshop will feature a presentation from Leaders Today, an international team of students that motivates youth in service learning. Rob Sauer, the State Department of Education's Deputy Superintendent of Innovation and Choice, will give the opening remarks to kick off the workshop.

The following is a list of the 12 schools awarded Learn & Serve Grants:

1. ANSER Charter School in Boise
2. Highlands Elementary in Boise
3. Middleton High School in Middleton
4. Parma Learning Center in Parma
5. Wendell Middle School in Wendell
6. The Alameda Center in Pocatello
7. Orofino Junior High and Orofino High School in Orofino
8. Sorensen Magnet School of the Arts & Humanities in Coeur d'Alene
9. Lakeland High School in Rathdrum
10. Mullan Trail Elem. in Post Falls
11. Burton Elem. School in Rexburg



## Schools can get grants to perform service learning (continued from page 1)

Her mother, Debbie Smith, said service learning projects have taught her children they can make a difference despite their age.

"Children learn that they have more power than they realize," she said.

Many other schools in the Boise district, and also Boise State University, use service learning. Kary hopes more of them will apply for the grants from her office to strengthen their programs.

"Kids in our U.S. culture, they don't have that many

opportunities where they can really use their skills and show what they can do," said Gayl Loutzenheiser, a Highlands parent who works as a volunteer coordinator at the school. "They're not milking the cow or fetching water; even 30 years ago, kids had to help more."

Through service learning, Loutzenheiser said, "they understand how much they can make a difference, how important they are as people."

By Anne Wallace Allen - aallen@idahostatesman.com

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HIGHLANDS ELEMENTARY FOURTH-GRADER AMAIA MOAD RECOUNTS HER EXPERIENCE WITH A SERVICE PROJECT LAST YEAR DURING AN ASSEMBLY FRIDAY MORNING WITH LEADERS TODAY, A GROUP FROM TORONTO THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO GET INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY SERVICE.

### Important Dates to Remember

**November 2, 2007**  
– *Pocatello Youth Leadership Workshop*

**November 15, 2007** – *Moscow Youth Leadership Workshop*

**December 3, 2007**  
– *Early Bird Registration Deadline for the Nat'l Service-Learning Conference in Minneapolis*

**January 15, 2008** – *First Progress Report Due*

**February 27-29, 2008** – *Serve Idaho Conference – Post Falls*





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**Learn and Serve Idaho** provides young people with opportunities to serve Idaho by connecting community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. Grantees create new service learning programs, replicate existing models, and train staff, faculty, adult volunteers, and students in service learning. Participants are K-12, school-age youth.

Eligible applicants for Learn & Serve grants are Idaho K-12 schools of any grade span. Grantee schools must be committed to service learning as a teaching/learning strategy and as an integral component of education.

The vision of Learn and Serve Idaho is to assist schools in implementing site-based programs of service learning through policy, practice, and capacity building. Learn and Serve Idaho provides financial and technical assistance to schools as they develop and implement policies and supportive structures at all levels, while reducing barriers to the institutionalization of service learning.

For more information contact Cheryl Kary—  
cmkary@sde.idaho.gov or 208-332-6913.

## Student's Corner

***Jerusha Stone from Middleton High School shared what Service Learning means to her in the following testimony.***

The knowledge that I have gained from my service learning is information that I know I will be able to benefit from for many years to come and they are also skills that are often necessary when achieving service projects. Learning how to deal with people, situations, circumstances, and learning how to reflect upon



*Boise Youth Leadership Workshop at BSU  
on September 20, 2007*

these events is often eye opening. The reflection of service learning also allows me to review the events and look deeper into situations I might not have recognized or otherwise evaluated. In our Christmas Drive I am learning how to deal with teachers, students, families, resources, and supplies. Reaching out to the community through education and service provides opportunities of learning for me, in return, to educate others. The distributing of knowledge to others provides the means of help that many people will benefit

from.

The service learning experiences have helped me realize, and consider possible career options. Participating in events that benefit me and the community or world around me, broadens my horizons to different aspects and helps me realize the opportunities that could be waiting.

*Jerusha Stone  
Middleton High School*

*Please send articles and student comments you would like to include in this newsletter to:*

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